

Assistant Director, ORR

7 April 1960

Chief, Geographic Research

GRA Contribution to the Semi-Annual Report to the President's Board
of Consultants

REFERENCE: AD/GR Memo to Area and Staff Chiefs, 1 April 1960, Subject: Semi-Annual
Report to the President's Board of Consultants

I. Economic and Geographic Intelligence Production

B. Geographic

Geographic intelligence production continued to be responsive to urgent planning and collection needs associated with covert operations. Basic studies were prepared on potential operational areas and key geographic data for a number of Caribbean and Latin American countries. Similar work was carried out in support of requirements for areas in West China and Tibet. Trends in the Near East have required an acceleration of ORR's major data compilation on the Kurds.

Several special geographic reports addressed themselves to the key factors of physical and human geography involved in various South Asian crises that developed during the period. A very detailed study on the Communist China - India border controversy was produced. Other reports analyzed the Communist China - Burma border disagreement, and the composition and distribution of Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.

A variety of research support was provided on trends and developing problems in the Arctic and Antarctic. A comprehensive study on Arctic territorial and sovereignty problems, which are growing in significance with the increase of military and economic activity in the region, was prepared. Intensive attention also continued to be given to the analysis of expanding Soviet activities in Antarctica with the purpose of identifying Soviet objectives and assessing achievements to date. In this effort, we have worked closely with the OCB. The Antarctic Staff, Department of State, was assisted in maximizing the potential intelligence collection opportunities offered by provisions of the Antarctic Treaty.

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Priority effort was devoted to an analysis of the location of Soviet installations in East Germany in order to determine the relationships between these and guided missile sites and related activity. It is hoped that the resultant data will provide clues as to the location of sites not yet identified and the types of installations for which missile protection is planned.

Other significant subjects that were given urgent attention in ORR's geographic intelligence activity were: determination of those areas in the USSR where geographic conditions are most favorable for the concealment of underground nuclear testing;

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II. Major Intelligence Gaps

B. Geographic

The acquisition of large-scale post-war topographic map coverage of the Sino-Soviet Bloc is necessary for the accurate positioning of targets

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The recent collection of a small number of maps of this type has not satisfied requirements.

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Latin American countries were noted during the period. Mapping and aerial photography coverage is extremely spotty and out of date. Reliable area studies and compilations of environmental data are generally lacking.

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The lack of information on developing social organizations and human relationships in Africa has not been rectified by routine collection efforts and continues to be a pressing need.

III. Dissemination and Utilization of ORR Products

B. Geographic Intelligence

An unclassified atlas of communist administrative units in China was disseminated widely among governmental and private organizations with the objective of stimulating and systematizing research on the area, to the net benefit of the U.S. intelligence effort. The response has been gratifying and has included a brisk demand for copies from users within and outside the government. Numerous commendations have been received.

ORR's geographic intelligence study of the India - China border dispute was utilized widely both within the intelligence community and at the national policy level. It was used as a briefing aid preparatory to the President's conversations with Mr. Nehru, and was also passed to the Government of India, in sanitized form, by the Department of State.

Geographic intelligence studies continued to be requested and used in connection with developments in the Tibetan uprisings.

Geographic intelligence support provided to the U.S. Delegation to the Antarctic Conference, 15 October - 1 December 1959, was acknowledged by the Head of the Delegation to have been most helpful. Other intelligence production on Soviet objectives in Antarctica was utilized by the OCB Working Group on Antarctica in its Operations Plan for Antarctica, and in a JCS study recommending increased Department of Defense concern with Soviet activities. As an associated activity, special briefings were provided to the Commandant, Air Force Intelligence Center, and to the USAF Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, on Soviet objectives in Antarctica, particularly their strategic significance including possible Soviet uses of Antarctica in space and missile operations, and the possible development of capabilities to circumvent U.S. early warning defenses.

A total of nine hundred and fifteen maps and charts were produced during this period. The Department of State continued to place all of its cartographic requirements on the Geographic Research Area. The bulk of the map and chart production was for the NIS program, NIE's, [REDACTED] economic and geographic reports, and urban and geographic studies for DD/P.

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IV. Guidance to Collectors and Intelligence Collection Activities

B. Geographic Intelligence

The urban plans of the USSR that are being prepared by
ORR for the operational needs of the clandestine services are
being utilized increasingly in [REDACTED]
We have also devoted a substantial part of the geographic
intelligence effort to strengthening the collection programs
on guided missiles. This work has taken the form of detailed

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In recognition of the opportunity offered by the deteriora-
tion of Sino-Indian relations over the border issue, collection
guidance was provided to the Geographic Attache in New Delhi
which resulted in the collection of hitherto unavailable topo-
graphic maps of the Sino-Indian border areas produced by the
Indian Government. Special steps were also taken, in coordination
with other agencies, to rectify informational gaps on Caribbean
and Latin American countries by dispatching guidance on priority
needs to the Geographic Attache and other representatives in the
field.

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Recent travel of the Geographic Attache from Bonn and the
Coordinator for Maps of the Department of State to the Soviet
Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania has provided specific
leads, operational information, and has increased the contact
between geographers and cartographers of the East and West.

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